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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a survey of participants in a teacher training program for the First Steps project, which provides additional support for development of literacy and numeracy among "at-risk" students in Western Australia schools. The training program was to assist teachers in implementing the program in their schools. Respondents to the survey (questionnaire appended) were 516 teachers, 25 principals, 54 deputy principals, 20 school development officers, and 38 other educators. Questions elicited responses concerning the value of program content revisions, the value of the training in presentation skills, participant presentation skills before and after the training, adequacy of the course, confidence about presentation after the course, other areas where the skills and knowledge gained in the course might be used, course strengths, other needed course components, additional support needed for respondents to carry out their jobs, and additional comments. (MSE)

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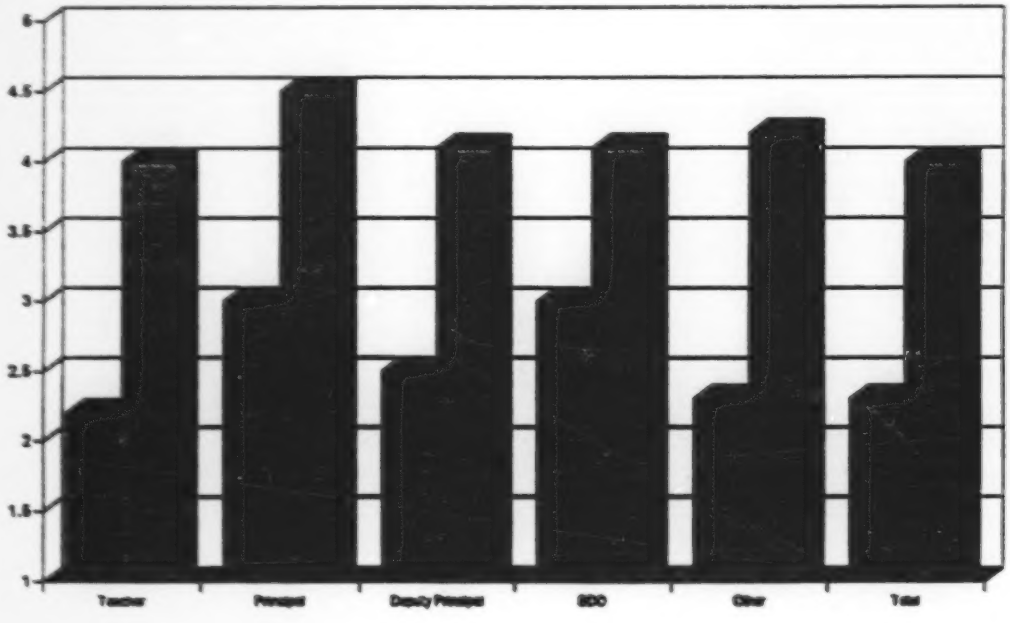
ED 419 423

A SURVEY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FOCUS TEACHER 'B' TRAINING FOR THE FIRST STEPS PROJECT

Figure 2 Comparison of presentation skills before and after the course (3.0 = about average)



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Editor's Note

This document is one of a series of reports that document the formative research that supported the creation and development of *First Steps*™. As a result of this research, the Education Department of Western Australia (EDWA), in collaboration with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) revised *First Steps* in response to each of the issues and questions raised by this research. *First Steps* training courses, Developmental Continua, and Resource Books are published with due amendments and alterations.

Other research documents that support the development of *First Steps* include:

Dr. Phil Deschamp:

- A Survey of the Implementation of the Literacy Component of the *First Steps* Project in WA
- The Implementation of The Literacy Component of The *First Steps* Project in ELAN Schools
- A Survey of the Effectiveness of the Focus Teacher 'B' Training for the *First Steps* Project
- Student Achievement: A Study of the Effects of *First Steps* Teaching on Student Achievement
- Case Studies of The Implementation of the *First Steps* Project in Twelve Schools
- The Development and Implementation of the *First Steps* Project in Western Australia

ACER:

- Empirical Validation of the *First Steps* Reading Continuum
- Empirical Validation of the *First Steps* Spelling and Writing Continua
- Empirical Re-Validation of the *First Steps* Spelling Continuum
- Assessment and Record of the Changes made to the Spelling Continuum
- The Impact of *First Steps* on Schools and Teachers
- The Impact of *First Steps* on the Reading and Writing Ability of Year 5 Students
- Background: *First Steps* and the ACER Evaluation & Report on the Validity of the *First Steps* Writing and Spelling Continua*

EDWA:

- Supporting Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Through *First Steps:* The Highgate Project

For more information about on-going *First Steps* research, please contact:

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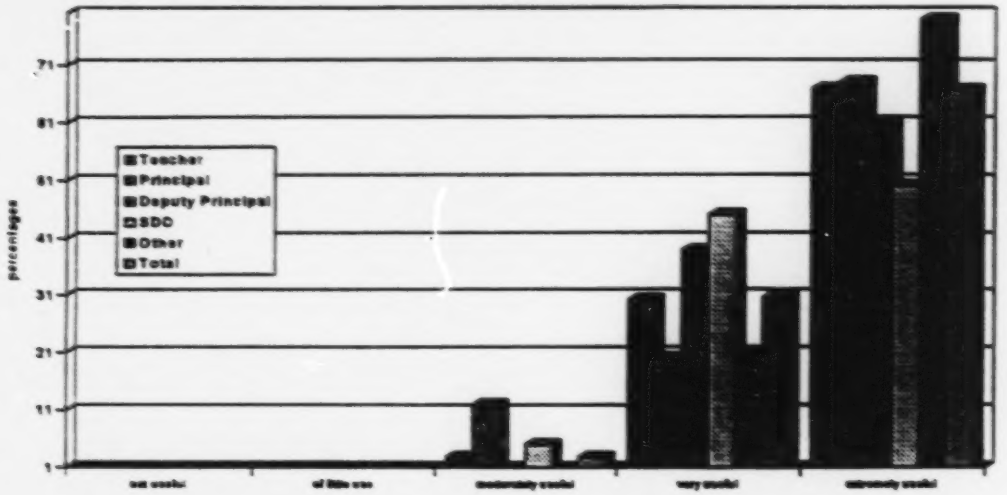
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to survey the people trained as a Focus Teacher 'B' ask them about how useful the training had been. The results are powerfully positive and are best expressed through the following graphs.

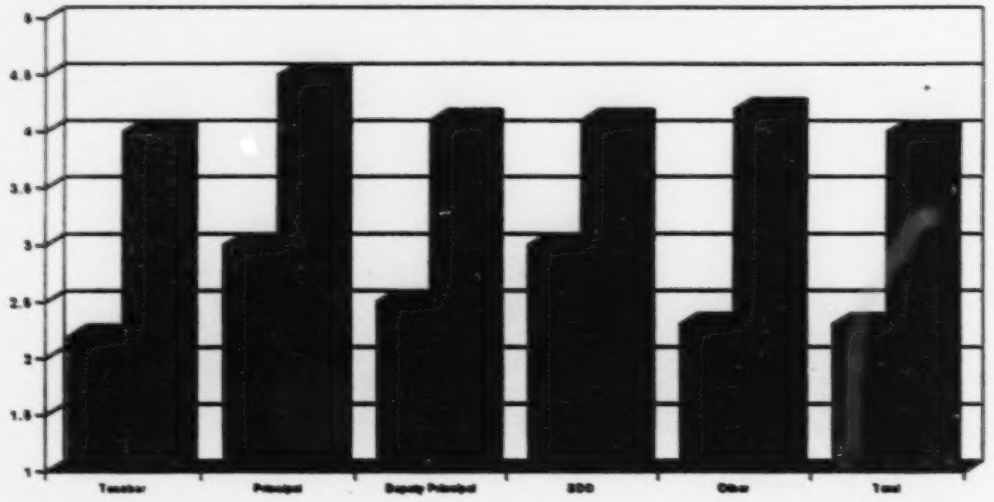
- The most common response was that the training in presentation skills was *extremely useful*

Figure 1 Value of the training in presentation skills



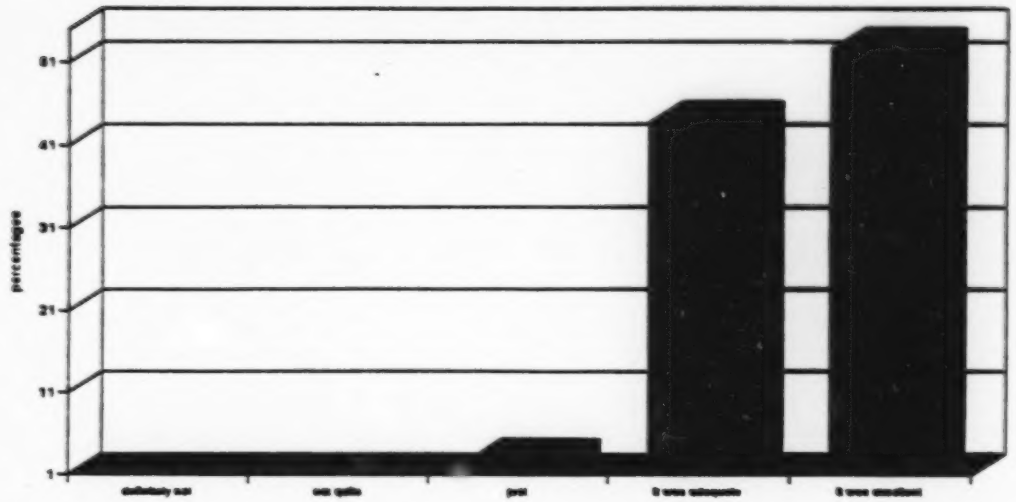
- Prior to the course all of the groups were at or below the *average* position. After the course, all were at or above the *moderately high* point on the scale.

Figure 2 Comparison of presentation skills before and after the course (3.0 = about average)



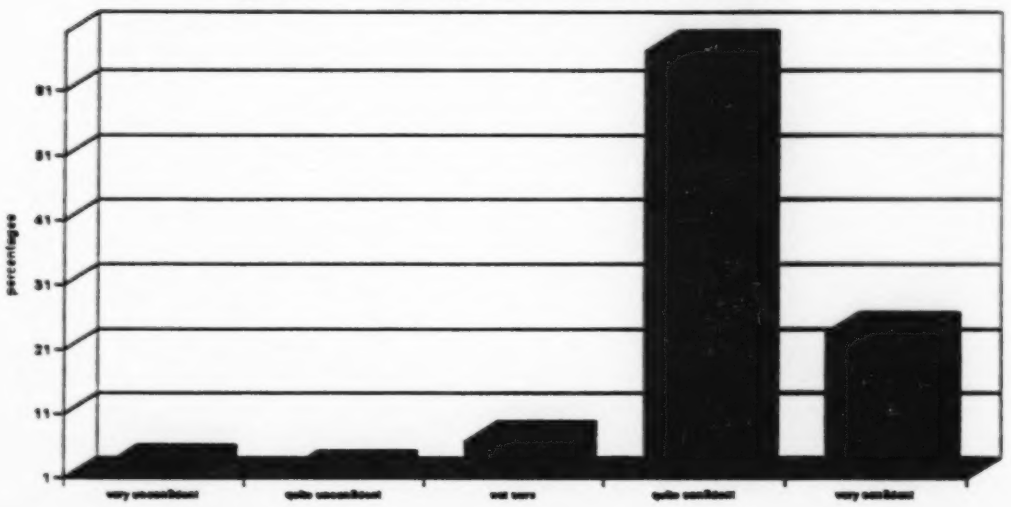
- When asked to rate whether the course structure and overall content (ie the time allocation, spaced learning, balance between theory and practice) was sufficient to meet the needs of a presenter, on a scale from *definitely not* to *yes, it was excellent*, the most common rating was that *it was excellent.*

Figure 3 Was the course adequate to train a presenter?



- On a scale from *very unconfident* to *very confident* two thirds said they were *quite confident* and nearly a quarter (and more than half of the School Development Officers) said they were *very confident.*

Figure 4 Ratings of confidence after the course



- Typical comments at the end of the questionnaire included:

> *The facilitators running the training course were superb. They imparted knowledge, gave support and encouragement and were living advertisements for an exceptional programme.*
>
> *The professional way the workshop was presented was appreciated and they made everyone feel comfortable no matter what their experiences and knowledge. The networking and team work aspect of the group were fabulous and will continue to be a valuable support network. I believe the real winners are the schools who are gaining staff who are well equipped to deal with new or inexperienced staff when it comes to inservicing.*

The most common comments were:

- *An excellent programme.*
- *Presenters of highest quality.*
- *Thank you.*
- *Excellent personal development.*

There is a strong call for further support, however, from the perspective of those who were in it, the training programme for Focus 'B' Teachers has been very successful.

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Preface

The First Steps project

The First Steps project emerged in 1988 in response to a growing perception in schools and the Central Office of the Education Department that many children who were experiencing difficulties in learning Literacy were not having their needs adequately met. Increasing awareness of the difficulties experienced by these children, coupled with their increasing numbers in their local schools due to increasing acceptance of the policy of *mainstreaming* children with learning difficulties had caused a ground swell demand for professional development for teachers on better ways of assisting these children.

Earlier responses to this perceived area of need had included major professional development initiatives on the wholistic nature of learning and language such as the Early Literacy Inservice Course (ELIC). Although improvements had been achieved, it was widely believed that the implementation of previous initiatives had been too dependent upon individual teacher initiatives which often had not received sufficient overt support and encouragement at the whole school level. Experience from involvement with ELIC suggested that the problem should be addressed more comprehensively as a whole school issue back at the educational bedrock of teaching principles and teaching methods.

In direct response to requests from schools Education Department officers devised a proposal for a radical refocus on the teaching of language. This proposal was forwarded to Government for support and the extra funding needed to enable the implementation process to be designed on a scale which might ensure that the proposed approach was embedded in a whole school approach to the teaching of language. To capture the notion that this was a *back to basics* proposal it was titled *First Steps*.

The proposal had as its goal:

> *To ensure that all K-5 children, especially those at risk, make measurable progress in the areas of mathematics and early literacy learning, and are able to sustain that progress in their later primary years.*

The project that evolved spread rapidly across schools in Western Australia. In 1994 three research projects were commissioned to document the origins of the project and the extent to which schools had adopted its materials and recommended procedures.

- The first project was to develop a history of First Steps from 1988 to 1994.
- The second was to survey 150 schools around the State to ask principals, teachers and parents about the extent to which First Steps was operating in the school, and what they considered had happened as a result.
- The third project consisted of case studies of twelve schools situated in widely differing parts of the State, and having experienced differing modes of support in the adoption of First Steps methods.

Subsequently two further projects were initiated:

1. In view of the special focus that First Steps developed with regard to Aboriginal students, the data from the survey and case studies were re-analysed from the perspective of ELAN schools and a separate report was prepared.

2. In view of the fact that from 1995 further training in First Steps practices would be conducted at a school level through Focus 'B' Teachers, and more than 600 teachers, deputy principals, principals and other educators had been trained for that role, it was decided to gather their views about the training and their ideas about how it could be improved.

This is the report of the evaluation of the training of Focus 'B' Teachers.

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

The First Steps project had been the focus of a number of separate but related evaluation projects since it began in Western Australia in 1988. The results of some of these evaluations have been described in the history report mentioned in the Preface.

The purpose of the present report was to describe the assessment that people trained as Focus 'B' Teachers made of their training programme and their ideas for how to improve it.

2.0 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questionnaire (see Appendix 1) sought information regarding:

Background information

1. **The Education Department district the respondent was in.**
2. **Positions held by respondents**

Course content

3. **The value of the revision of First Steps content.**
4. **The value of the training in presentation skills.**
5. **Respondents' ratings of their presentation skills at the beginning of the course and after it.**
6. **Respondents' ratings of the adequacy of the course**
7. **Respondents' confidence about presenting after the course.**
8. **Other areas where they might use the knowledge and skills gained through the course.**
9. **The strengths of the course.**
10. **Other components the course needs.**

Support needed

11. **Additional support needed for them to carry out their roles.**
12 **Any other comments respondents wanted to add.**

3.0 METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

A questionnaire was designed in co-operation with an independent consultant. When it had been trialed and revised the questionnaires were distributed to all people trained as Focus 'B' Teachers in 1994.

The completed questionnaires were returned to the independent consultant for analysis and documenting in this report.

4.0 RESULTS

Replies were received from a total of 516 teachers, 25 principals, 54 deputy principals, 20 School Development Officers, and 38 other educators who were mostly Key Teachers or Teacher/Librarians. This was a response rate of close to 100 per cent in each category.

The data from the analysis of the replies from each group are shown in the tables contained in the body of this report. Particularly important sections of the data have been highlighted with graphs.

PART A - Background information

4.1 The Education Department district the respondent was in.

Table 1 shows that the survey received replies from people from most of the districts of the Education Department of Western Australia.

Table 1 Education Department district of the respondents

District	No	%
Perth South	15	2.3
Balga	24	3.7
Narrogin	19	2.9
Geraldton South	41	6.3
Willetton	24	3.7
Melville	23	3.5
Geraldton North	20	3.1
Northam	24	3.7
Albany	26	4.0
Armadale	23	3.5
Bunbury South	18	2.8
Bunbury North	16	2.5
Thornlie	25	3.8
Esperance	23	3.5
Hedland	20	3.1
Scarborough	31	4.7
Merredin	19	2.9
Cockburn	32	4.9
Kimberley	15	2.3
Manjimup	17	2.6
Swanbourne	20	3.1
Peel	27	4.1
Kalgoorlie	28	4.3
Karratha	15	2.3
Dianella	23	3.5
Darling Range	19	2.9
Bayswater	24	3.7
Joondalup	38	5.8
Total	653	100

Breakdowns of the results by District did not indicate any significant patterns and have not been included in this report.

4.2 Positions help by respondents

Table 2 shows the positions held by the people who replied to the survey.

Table 2 Positions help by respondents

Positions	No	%
Teacher	516	79.0
Principal	25	3.8
Deputy Principal	54	8.3
School Development Officer	20	3.1
Other	38	5.8
Total	**653**	**100**

As the respondents represent virtually the entire population of Focus 'B' Teachers trained, the adequacy of representation of each of the above groups is not relevant. In any event, as shown below, the general similarity in the replies when broken down by position render this not a contentious issue.

PART B - Course content

4.3 The value of the revision of First Steps content.

The training programme for Focus 'B' Teachers contained a component of revision of First Steps content. As shown by Table 3a, the modal rating (ie the most common response) of the value of that aspect of the course was that it was *extremely useful.*

This was the most common anwer from all of the groups except for the School Development Officers who may have already been familiar with the content. Their modal rating was *very useful*, however nearly as many rated it as *extremely useful.*

Very few people (5%) gave the content aspect of the training programme a rating other than *very useful* or *extremely useful* and virtually all of those said it was *moderately useful.* No one rated it as *not useful,*.

The average or mean score of 4.5 for the total of the respondents was midway between *very useful* (4.0) and *extremely useful* (5.0). This mid score did not vary significantly across the types of position.

From this it seem safe to conclude that any future courses should retain this component.

Table 3a Value of the revision of First Steps content

Positions	not useful	of little use	moderately useful	very useful	extremely useful	Mean
Teacher		0 8	4.3	37.7	57.3	4.5
Principal				40.0	60.0	4.6
Deputy Principal			11.1	31.5	57.4	4.5
School Development Officer				55.0	45.0	4.5
Other			5.3	36.8	57.9	4.5
Total		**0.6**	**4.6**	**37.7**	**57.0**	**4.5**

Table 3b lists comments respondents made regarding the revision of First Steps content of the training programme. (The numbers at the right of the table show the percentage of respondents who made a comment of that nature.)

Typical comments about the content aspect of the course included:

> *It is always interesting and valuable to re-do such material as you always learn something new or are able to reassess what you do!*
>
> *Revisiting is always valuable. "Presenting" increases learning. Sharing problems of presenting and strategies heightens the value of modules.*

The most common comments were:

- *Revision essential as it allows clarification and consolidation.*
- *Allowed teachers to absorb information missed previously.*
- *In depth presentation and study of content increases personal understanding and knowledge.*
- *Showed information from a presenter's perspective.*

Table 3b Comments regarding the revision of First Steps content (Percentages)

	Comment	No.
1	Revision essential as it allows clarification and consolidation.	58
2	Allowed teachers to absorb information missed previously.	18
3	In depth presentation and study of content increases personal understanding and knowledge.	15
4	Showed information from a presenter's perspective.	15
5	Revision allows for reassessment in the light of practical experience.	9
6	Beneficial to share views\experiences of other Focus teachers.	8
7	Not revision as most was new.	5
8	Increased confidence.	4
9	Each presenter has a different perspective.	3
10	Repetition of familiar material.	2
11	Gave a good overall view of strategies and role of Focus B Teacher.	1
12	Ability to inservice staff, run PD days and network.	1
13	Would have preferred to do it more slowly.	1
14	Great peer Focus B Teachers increased motivation.	1
15	I am able to teach each child at own level.	1
16	Refocussed on strengths and weaknesses.	1

4.4 The value of the training in presentation skills.

Table 4a reports the opinions of Focus 'B' Teachers regarding the value of the training in presentation skills. Again the most common response was that that aspect of the course was *extremely useful.*

This was the most common anwer from all of the groups. The replies from those in the *others* category was particulary positive with **nearly 80 per cent rating the training in presentation skills as *extremely useful.*** This is a noteworthy result as the *others* category consisted of a high proportion of Key Teachers who were well placed to appreciate the sort of presentation skills likely to be needed.

Only 2.9 per cent of the respondents gave the training in presentation skills a rating other than *very useful* or *extremely useful* and no one rated it as *not useful.*

The mean score of 4.6 for the total of the respondents was again around half way between *very useful* (4.0) and *extremely useful* (5.0). However the mean for those in the others category was 4.8 which is close to *extremely useful.*

Table 4a Value of the training in presentation skills

Positions	not useful	of little use	moderately useful	very useful	extremely useful	Mean
Teacher			2.9	30.2	66.9	4.6
Principal			12.0	20.0	68.0	4.6
Deputy Principal				38.9	61.1	4.6
School Development Officer			5.0	45.0	50.0	4.5
Other				21.1	78.9	4.8
Total			**2.9**	**30.5**	**66.6**	**4.6**

Experience with analysing data of this type suggests that results of this level of positive support are not common. The strength of the support for the training programne is shown clearly by Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 **Value of the training in presentation skills**

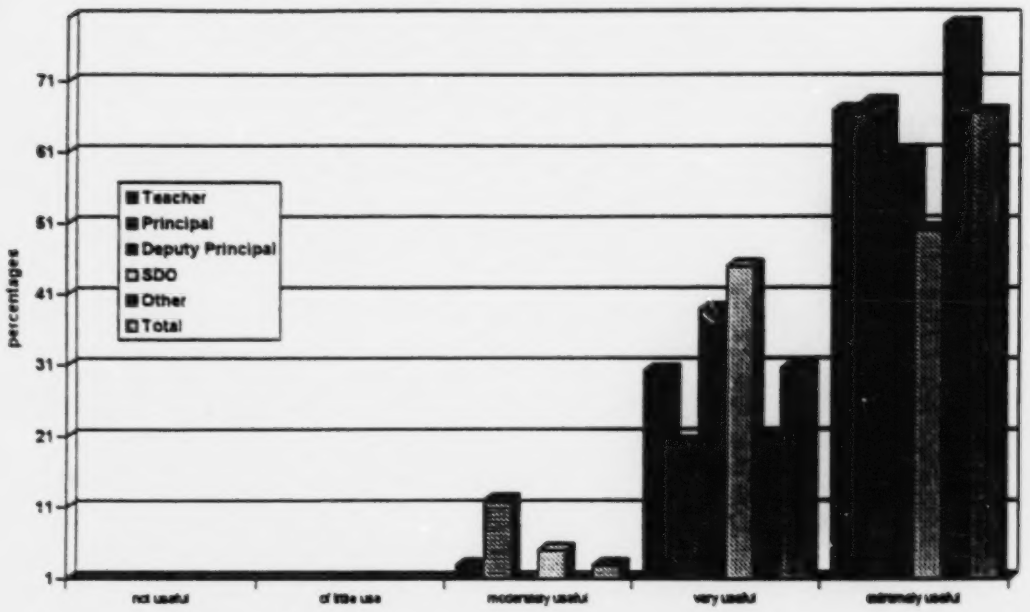


Table 4b lists comments respondents made regarding the training in presentation skills. Typical comments included:

> *The skills of negotiation, dealing with difficult people and the subtle presentation skills (i.e. non-verbal) are terrific skills to have learned. Confidence in one's self has developed also and I now feel able to present to my peers.*

The most common comments were:

- *Essential in teaching negotiation and presentation skills.*
- *Increased confidence to present information to peers.*
- *Learnt good skills to deal with adults in different types of situations.*

Table 4b Comments regarding the value of the training in presentation skills

	Comment	%
1	Essential in teaching negotiation and presentation skills.	43
2	Increased confidence to present information to peers.	29
3	Learnt good skills to deal with adults in different types of situations.	17
4	Extremely beneficial on a professional and personal level.	9
5	Covered aspects in detail and gave insight into unfamiliar areas.	5
6	Able to adapt format to own individual style.	4
7	Insight into the preparation and organisation skills required.	4
8	Still useful although had already covered most of the issues.	3
9	Allowed for establishment of supportive peer links which will be of ongoing benefit to teachers and children.	2
10	Enhances the setting of realistic goals.	2
11	Objectives clearly defined.	2
12	Presenters good role models.	2
13	Well structured.	1
14	Empowered me to give leadership to my peers.	1
15	Made me aware of the need to increase people's awareness of First Steps aims and objectives.	1

4.5 Respondents' ratings of their presentation skills at the beginning of the course and after it

The most common rating respondents gave to their presentation skills at the beginning of the course was *quite low*. Principals, School Development Officers and *others* showed a modal rating of *about average* (see Table 5a).

Less than one per cent of the respondents rated their skills at the beginning of the course as *high*.

Table 5a Ratings of presentation skills at the beginning of the course

Positions	very low	quite low	about average	moderately high	high	Mean
Teacher	24.0	39.1	29.3	6.6	1.0	2.2
Principal	8.0	12.0	48.0	32.0		3.0
Deputy Principal	9.3	40.7	42.6	5.6	1.9	2.5
School Development Officer		30.0	40.0	30.0		3.0
Other	21.1	28.9	44.7	5.3		2.3
Total	21.3	37.4	32.3	8.1	.9	**2.3**

The most common rating respondents gave to their presentation skills after the course was *moderately high* (see Table 5b).

Nearly a quarter of the respondents rated their skills after the course as *high*.

Table 5b Ratings of presentation skills after the course

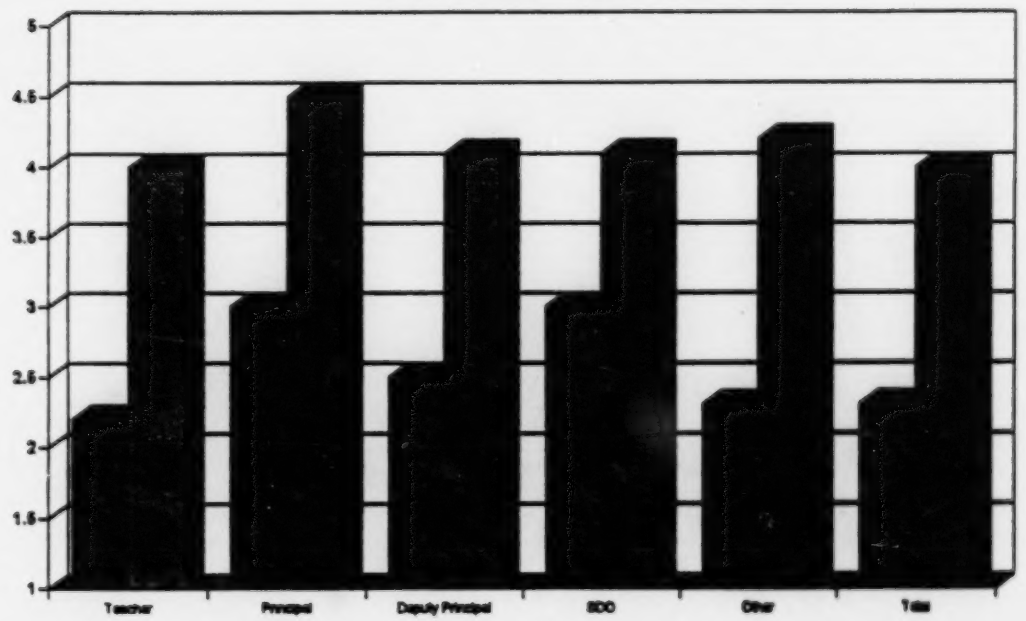
Positions	very low	quite low	about average	moderately high	high	Mean
Teacher		0.8	19.0	58.8	21.4	4.0
Principal				52.0	48.0	4.5
Deputy Principal			14.8	59.3	25.9	4.1
School Development Officer			10.0	70.0	20.0	4.1
Other			15.8	52.6	31.6	4.2
Total		**0.6**	**17.5**	**58.5**	**23.3**	**4.0**

Table 5c and Figure 2 show the changes in mean scores of ratings of presentation skills at the beginning of the course and after it. Prior to the course all of the groups were at or below the *average* position. After the course, all were at or above the *moderately high* point on the scale.

Table 5c Comparison of mean scores of ratings of presentation skills before and after the course

Positions	Before	After
Teacher	2.2	4.0
Principal	3.0	4.5
Deputy Principal	2.5	4.1
School Development Officer	3.0	4.1
Other	2.3	4.2
Total	2.3	4.0

Figure 2 Comparison of presentation skills before and after the course (3.0 = about average)



It is clear from these results that the respondents considered that had benefited significantly from the training programme.

4.6 Respondents' ratings of the adequacy of the course

When asked to rate whether the course structure and overall content (ie the time allocation, spaced learning, balance between theory and practice) was sufficient to meet the needs of a presenter, on a scale from *definitely not* to *yes, it was excellent*, the most common rating was that *it was excellent* (see Table 6a and Figure 3 below).

Less than three per cent of the respondents rated it below *adequate*.

Table 6a Was the course adequate to train a presenter?

Positions	definitely not	not quite	just	it was adequate	it was excellent	Mean
Teacher		0.8	2.7	44.0	52.5	4.5
Principal			4.0	40.0	56.0	4.5
Deputy Principal			1.9	42.6	55.6	4.5
School Development Officer			5.0	50.0	45.0	4.4
Other		2.6	2.6	42.1	52.6	4.4
Total		**0.8**	**2.8**	**43.8**	**52.7**	**4.5**

Figure 3 Was the course adequate to train a presenter?

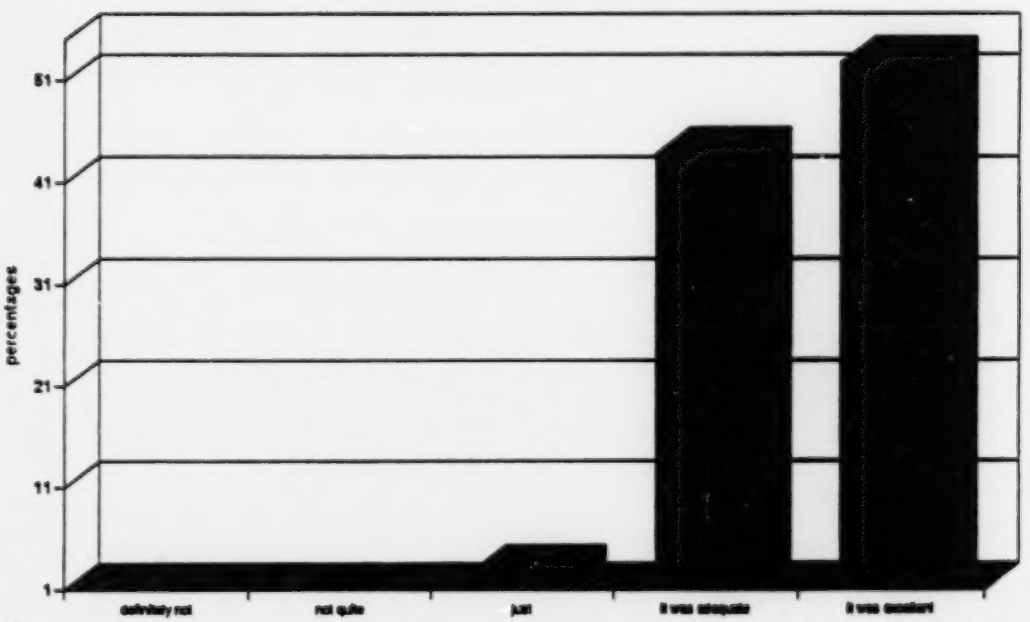


Table 6b lists comments respondents made regarding the adequacy of the training programme. Typical comments included:

> *At the end of each two day session I felt rather overwhelmed, but the amount of content was just right to work on and comprehend before the next session.*

Every possible situation or thing was thought of and covered. Very thorough and interesting.

The most common comments were:

- *Pleased with course structure and presentation.*
- *Although very intensive worthwhile and well balanced.*
- *Good balance between theory and practice.*

Table 6b Comments regarding the adequacy of the course

	Comment	No.
1	Pleased with course structure and presentation.	15
2	Although very intensive worthwhile and well balanced.	10
3	Good balance between theory and practice.	8
4	Time between sessions allowed time to put course into perspective.	6
5	Presenters' support and guidance was invaluable.	5
6	Feedback gained from colleagues helpful.	5
7	Very valuable.	5
8	I feel confident about presenting.	3
9	Would have preferred a little more practice early on.	3
10	Would have preferred more opportunity to present in different modules.	3
11	Information excellent but time and practice was very limited.	3
12	Wide area covered with lots of practical help and experience.	2
13	Whatever else is needed will come with practice.	2
14	Very supportive.	2
15	Fitting into school schedule was difficult and stressful at times.	2
16	Some areas well balanced and spaced but other areas needed more time allocation.	2
17	Would have preferred the course to be more condensed and less spread out.	2
18	Would have preferred more demonstrations on how to present.	2
19	It would have been valuable to have the information summarised in 'Presenter's Handbook'.	2
20	More group presenting practice helpful.	2
21	Links made with content and presentation excellent.	1
22	Would have preferred it being done before Term 4 as this is the busiest.	1
23	Support of Central Office encouraging.	1
24	Disjointed. It would have been better to put similar/related parts of course together.	1
25	Still need greater knowledge and background reading of content.	1

4.7 Respondents' confidence about presenting after the course.

The final rating scale asked respondents to say how confident they felt about using their knowledge and skills to present First Steps language components. On a scale from *very unconfident* to *very confident* (see Table 7a and Figure 4 below) two thirds said they were *quite confident* and nearly a quarter (and more than half of the School Development Officers) said they were *very confident.*

Less than three per cent rated themselves as *unconfident.*

Table 7a Ratings of confidence after the course

Positions	very unconfident	quite unconfident	not sure	quite confident	very confident	Mean
Teacher		2.5	7.4	69.2	20.9	4.1
Principal			4.0	52.0	44.0	4.4
Deputy Principal			5.6	68.5	25.9	4.2
School Development Officer				45.0	55.0	4.6
Other	5.3	2.6	5.3	60.5	26.3	4.0
Total	**03**	**2.1**	**6.7**	**67.2**	**23.6**	**4.1**

Figure 4 Ratings of confidence after the course

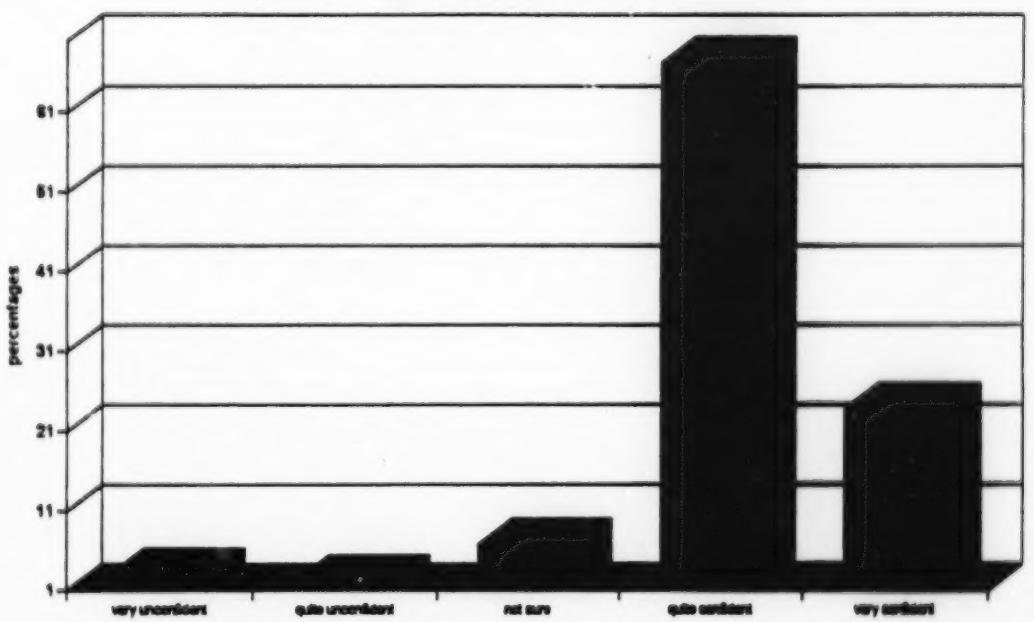


Table 7b lists comments respondents made regarding their levels of confidence after the training programme. Typical comments included:

> *I believe that my practical experience with F.S. in the classroom and the skills I have gained from Train-the-Trainer are a great resource for presenting.*

> *Two components which I'm successfully using in the classroom I feel very confident about. However ones I'm still learning about and trialing I'm a little more reluctant to present. I feel though that as I become more in tune with those components they will be fine.*

The most common comments were:

- *With practice will become more confident.*
- *Confident in some areas but need more hands on experience across the whole First Steps spectrum.*
- *Confidence can be maintained with adequate time for preparation and support.*
- *Still have concerns but with time and resources will come confidence.*

Table 7b Comments regarding confidence after the course

	Comment	No.
1	With practice will become more confident.	22
2	Confident in some areas but need more hands on experience across the whole First Steps spectrum.	10
3	Confidence can be maintained with adequate time for preparation and support.	7
4	Still have concerns but with time and resources will come confidence.	7
5	The course covered everything. I feel extremely confident.	6
6	More preparation time before confident outside of own staff.	5
7	Presenters notes an excellent resource.	4
8	There will always be more knowledge and skills to acquire.	3
9	Practice has led to confidence.	3
10	Not sure I know the content well enough.	3
11	Skills gained from 'train the trainer' a great resource.	3
12	More confident than I did initially.	3
13	Practical experience gained from First Steps in the classroom beneficial.	2
14	Presentation to other members increased confidence.	1
15	Would have preferred more presentation practice.	1
16	I hope I get to use skills gained.	1
17	Informal promotion very effective for parents and teachers; library displays, Education Week, etc.	1

4.8 Other areas where they might use the knowledge and skills gained through the course.

Table 8 lists comments respondents made where they might use the knowledge and skills gained through the course. Typical comments included:

> *Presenting information to peers in other areas (i.e. science, maths etc.), assisting me to present to other adults confidently (i.e. parents, P & C meeting, SDMG etc.)*
>
> *I believe the presenter skills gained from Focus Teacher B would be useful to present any content and it has helped me gain confidence in public/peer speaking.*

The most common comments were:

- *Parent meetings/education.*
- *Staff inservices/workshops/School Development Planning etc.*
- *In classroom.*
- *Presentations in general; sport and service clubs, etc.*
- *More confident in staff meetings.*
- *Public speaking is a life skill.*
- *Negotiation/communication skills.*

Table 8 Other areas where they might use the knowledge and skills gained through the course

	Comment	%
1	Parent meetings/education.	27
2	Staff inservices/workshops/School Development Planning etc.	22
3	In classroom.	19
4	Presentations in general; sport and service clubs, etc.	18
5	More confident in staff meetings.	16
6	Public speaking is a life skill.	13
7	Negotiation/communication skills.	12
8	Furthering career.	6
9	Community/social level.	6
10	Conducting courses/meetings.	5
11	Group management.	4
12	Facilitating.	3
13	Working with administration/executive teams.	3
14	Preparing to be trained in other curriculum areas.	3
15	Assisting with other teachers in the classroom	3
16	Supporting staff.	3
17	Recognising own skills increases confidence.	3
18	Consultant work.	2
19	Feel more assertive in dealing with important matters.	2
20	Time management.	2
21	Private business meetings.	2
22	Feel more confident in teaching others.	2
23	Key teacher role.	1

4.9 The strengths of the course.

Table 9 lists comments respondents made regarding strengths of the training programme. Typical comments included:

> *Great presenters. Organized content. Well structured - ongoing revision. A lot of help and time to reflect.*

> *A high quality presenter's file. Great ideas for presenting First Steps material to staff. Ideas for interchanging ideas - networking.*

The most common comments were:

- *Networking with others dedicated to First Steps programme.*
- *Excellent presenters.*
- *Learning how to plan and prepare for presenting First Steps material.*
- *Revision of content.*
- *People skills.*
- *Personal growth and confidence.*

Table 9. Strengths of the course

	Comment	%
1	Networking with others dedicated to First Steps programme.	56
2	Excellent presenters.	29
3	Learning how to plan and prepare for presenting First Steps material.	28
4	Revision of content.	17
5	People skills.	12
6	Personal growth and confidence.	10
7	Building on personal levels of understanding of First Steps.	7
8	Well presented.	7
9	Practicality.	6
10	Plenty of back up in materials and resources.	5
11	Good time span.	5
12	Presenting to adults.	4
13	Skills and organisation of course.	4
14	Everything.	4
15	Awareness of adult learning principles.	3
16	Addressed participants' needs.	3
17	High quality presenter's file.	2
18	Knowledge of material.	2
19	Final day presentations/graduations.	2
20	Non-threatening environment.	2
21	District support.	1
22	Enabling schools to inservice their staff.	1
23	Child centred.	1
24	'Principles of Change' model excellent.	1
25	Planning Day with Principals.	1
26	Good venue.	1
27	Relevance to us and our schools.	1
28	Concise.	1
29	Interesting.	1

4.10 Other components the course needs.

Table 10 lists comments respondents made regarding the other components which respondents would include in the training programme. Typical comments included:

> *I thought the course was pretty comprehensive and covered all areas. Maybe more time to deal with issues - reluctant teachers - in more detail.*

> *Maybe some smaller presentations along the way. this would help with confidence, nerve control and knowledge.*

The most common comments were:

- *None - all covered.*
- *More time to prepare presentations/hands on opportunities.*

Table 10 Other components the course needs

	Comment	%
1	None - all covered.	14
2	More time to prepare presentations/hands on opportunities.	13
3	Parent education.	4
4	First Steps Maths component.	4
5	More time to look at modules.	3
6	More time to deal with issues e.g. reluctant teachers etc.	2
7	More time to share ideas.	2
8	More opportunities to involve Principals.	2
9	Maybe a second small presentation.	2
10	More background reading.	2
11	Setting up Teachers' Resource Centre.	1
12	More time with Longman Cheshire.	1
13	More revision of First Steps.	1
14	Showing teachers how to timetable including First Steps covering all curriculum areas.	1
15	Inclusion of Principals/Administration staff at Linking Day.	1
16	Each Focus B Teacher needed to have completed all First Steps modules before taking on role and training sessions.	1
17	More time to compare versions I and II.	1
18	More time to go through Linking Day material.	1
19	At least one more full on presentation.	1
20	Maybe a second small presentation.	1
21	Handbook to summarise.	1
22	Presentation notes on each module for each Focus B Teacher.	1
23	Role play.	1
24	Group processes.	1
25	More details on running a School Development presentation.	1
26	Computing package information.	1
27	More useful material; e.g. children with reading difficulties.	1
28	More time to practice reflective listening.	1
29	Involvement with children in Micro teaching sessions as demonstrations of learning.	1

PARTC - Support needed

4.11 Additional support needed for them to carry out their roles.

Table 11 lists comments respondents made regarding the additional support which respondents considered they needed to carry out their role in 1995 and beyond. Typical comments included:

A set of Longman Cheshire materials.

Time - to prepare adequately. Money - to finance relief.

Networking time - to share ideas, problems etc. Access to resources, materials and people.

The most common comments were:

- *Require time in school for preparation and updating information.*
- *Networking with other Focus B Teachers.*
- *Teacher relief is required to follow up and inservice staff.*
- *Access to SDO.*
- *Copies of presenters' notes and Longman Cheshire materials.*

Table 11 Additional support needed

	Comment	No.
1	Require time in school for preparation and updating information.	40
2	Networking with other Focus B Teachers.	38
3	Teacher relief is required to follow up and inservice staff.	22
4	Access to SDO.	20
5	Copies of presenters' notes and Longman Cheshire materials.	15
6	District Office support.	11
7	Co-operation between schools.	7
8	Principal support.	6
9	Further professional development.	5
10	SRA allowance.	3
11	Indication of full role in the school.	2
12	Funding for purchase of materials.	2
13	Central Office support.	2
14	Opportunity to present.	1
15	Additional key teacher for PROSTAR.	1

4.12 Other comments

The final table lists any other comments respondents chose to make regarding the training programme. Typical comments included:

> *The facilitators running the training course were superb. They imparted knowledge, gave support and encouragement and were living advertisements for an exceptional programme.*

> *The professional way the workshop was presented was appreciated and they made everyone feel comfortable no matter what their experiences and knowledge. The networking and team work aspect of the group were fabulous and will continue to be a valuable support network. I believe the real winners are the schools who are gaining staff who are well equipped to deal with new or inexperienced staff when it comes to inservicing.*

The most common comments were:

- *An excellent programme.*
- *Presenters of highest quality.*
- *Thank you.*
- *Excellent personal development.*

Table 12 Other comments

	Comment	No.
1	An excellent programme.	41
2	Presenters of highest quality.	38
3	Thank you.	35
4	Excellent personal development.	12
5	Will enhance my teaching.	6
6	Networking a very good idea.	4
7	Hope Education Department makes other such programmes available.	4
8	Interesting to compare the Longman Cheshire materials and note changes.	3
9	Supportive non-threatening environment.	3
10	Develops team spirit.	3
11	Unfortunate that funding stopped so quickly.	3
12	Real winners are the schools who are gaining staff equipped to do inservicing.	2
13	Hard work but worthwhile.	2
14	Focus/key teachers need more time in school to help teachers with First Steps strategies.	1
15	More presentations - one from each continua.	1
16	All notes could have been given in one session.	1
17	Feel course was too long.	1
18	Would have preferred course in school holidays so I did not have to spend time out of class.	1
19	Teachers more receptive to change if ideas come from peers.	1
20	Negotiation component too long.	1
21	More information before start of course would be beneficial.	1
22	Use royalties from Longman Cheshire to fund further training.	1
23	Addressing concerns made the course all the more meaningful.	1

5.0 CONCLUSION

These data are so strong that readers will have drawn the only conclusion possible - that the people who have been trained as Focus 'B' Teachers valued the training and are confident about taking up their roles in 1995.

There is a strong call for further support, however, from the perspective of those who were in it, the training programme for Focus 'B' Teachers has been very successful.

Appendix 1

The survey instrument

FIRST STEPS FOCUS TEACHER 'B' TRAINING EVALUATION

The goal of Focus Teacher 'B' training has been to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to present First Steps language content in 1995 and beyond. This questionnaire is to enable us to gauge the effectiveness of the Course.

For each of the items which follow please write the number which best suits your views in the box or to write comments on the lines provided.

1. **DISTRICT** _____

2. **POSITION**

Teacher	1
Principal	2
Deputy Principal	3
SDO	4
Other	5

COURSE CONTENT

3a. How useful was the revision of First Steps content?

Not useful	1
Of little use	2
Moderately useful	3
Very useful	4
Extremely useful	5

3b. Please say why?

_____

_____

_____

4a. How useful was the training in presentation skills?

Not useful	1
Of little use	2
Moderately useful	3
Very useful	4
Extremely useful	5

4b. Please say why?

_____

_____

_____

5a. Where were you on the presenter's continuum a the beginning of the course?

Very low	1
Quite low	2
About average	3
Moderately high	4
High	5

5b. Where do you feel you are on the presenter's continuum now?

Very low	1
Quite low	2
About average	3
Moderately high	4
High	5

COURSE STRUCTURE

6a. Was the course structure and overall content sufficient to meet the training needs of a presenter, e.g. the time allocation, spaced learning, balance between theory and practice?

Definitely not	1
Not quite	2
Just	3
Yes, it was adequate	4
Yes, it was excellent	5

6b. Any comment?

_____

_____

_____

7a. How confident are you to use your knowledge and skills to present First Steps language components?

Very unconfident	1
Quite unconfident	2
I'm not sure	3
Quite confident	4
Very confident	5

7b. Any comment?

_____

_____

_____

8. In what other areas can you see yourself using the knowledge and skills you have acquired from Focus Teacher 'B' training?

_____

_____

_____

9. What were the strengths of the Focus Teacher 'B' Course?

_____

_____

_____

10. On reflection, what other components would you include in the Course?

_____

_____

_____

11. What additional support do you require to carry out your role in 1995 and beyond?

_____

_____

_____

12. Is there anything else you would like to say?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your valuable feedback.